

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 NEA-14

OMB-01 H-03 NSC-07 SS-20 DRC-01 /117 W

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R 281725Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4538

INFOZ SECDEF

CINCLANT

COMICEDEFOR

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT IC

SUBJECT: AFTERMATH OF LOCAL ELECTIONS

REF: REYKJAVIK 0714

1. WITH VOTE-COUNT COMPLETED, ALL POLITICAL PARTIES ARE ATTEMPTING TO ASSESS OUTCOME OF MAY 26 MUNICIPAL AND LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS AND WHAT LESSON THEY HOLD FOR JUNE 30 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. WHILE ALL PARTIES AGREE RESULTS WERE VICTORY FOR INDEPENDENCE PARTY, ALL EXCEPT IP CAUTION THAT LOCAL ELECTION TRENDS IN ICELAND HAVE NEVER BEEN DIRECTLY INDICATIVE OF WHAT IS TO BE EXPECTED NATIONALLY. ACTUAL PERCENTAGES OF VOTE ON COUNTRY-WIDE BASIS FOR FOLLOWING:

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1970 LOCAL RESULTS MAY 26 RESULTS

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (SDP)	13.5	9.2
PROGRESSIVES (PP)	20.0	18.9
INDEPENDENCE PARTY (IP)	42.8	50.5
PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE (PA)	16.7	17.2
LIBERAL LEFTISTS (OLL)	7.0	4.2

2. ABOVE RESULTS SHOW THAT IP GAINED 7.7 PERCENT WITH PA GAINING 0.5 AND PP LOSING 1.1 PERCENT. BIG LOSERS WERE SDP WITH 4.3 AND OLL WITH LOSS OF 2.8 PERCENT. THUS, IP GAIN APPEARS TO HAVE COME PRIMARILY FROM SDP AND OLL. IP INTERPRETS THIS TO MEAN THAT WITH LEFTIST PARTIES IN DISARRAY AND WITHOUT COHERENT PUBLIC STAND, VOTERS HAVE CHOSEN TO MOVE RIGHT TO IP RATHER THAN FURTHER LEFT TO PA. SPOKESMEN FOR PA ALSO CITE "DISINTEGRATION ON THE LEFT" AS CAUSING OUTCOME BUT INTERPRET THEIR SMALL GAIN AS SIGN THAT VOTERS SEE THEM AS ONLY PARTY WITH FIRM AND CONSISTENT LEFTIST POLICIES.

3. QUESTION GENERALLY BEING ASKED IS WHAT HAPPENED TO ANTI-IDF OLL-YOUNG PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT. SINCE THEIR LEADERS HAD URGED VOTERS TO SUPPORT OLL/SDP TICKET WHERE JOINT LISTS WERE BEING RUN, OLL/SDP DEFEAT RAISES QUESTION WHETHER THEY CAN NOW CONSTITUTE VIALBE NATIONAL PARTY. PA NEWSPAPER THJODVILJINN SAID IT LOOKED AS IF MEDIA HAD GIVEN CONSIDERABLY MORE IMPORTANCE TO THIS MOVEMENT THAN WAS DESERVED AND MADE IT APPEAR MUCH MORE NUMEROUS THAN IT IS. WHETHER MOVEMENT HAS A FUTURE WILL DEPEND ON RAPID AND EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION IN NEXT FEW WEEKS.

4. IN ADDITION TO FACT THAT PERCENTAGES IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION WILL PROBABLY BE SOMEWHAT LOWER FOR IP AND PA (WITH WIDE DISTRIBUTION AMONG SPLINTER GROUPS), THERE IS FACT THAT RURAL CONSTITUENCIES ARE OVER-REPRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT. THEREFORE, COMBINED VOTE OF OPPOSITION PARTIES IN LOCAL ELECTIONS DOES NOT PROMISE THEY WILL BE ABLE TO FORM GOVERNMENT AFTER JUNE 30 ELECTIONS, EVEN IN UNLIKELY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EVENT THEY COULD HOLD THEIR PERCENTAGES. IN OTHER WORDS, COMBINED VOTE OF NEARLY SIXTY PERCENT IN LOCAL ELECTIONS DOES NOT TRANSLATE INTO NECESSARY 32 SEATS IN ALTHING. THUS, CAUTION IN INTERPRETING RESULTS IS STILL IN ORDER PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO PRIMARY U.S. CONCERN, FUTURE OF US-ICELANDIC DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP.

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